

Docket No.: 05058/75601

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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re

U.S. Application of:

Eiichi YOSHIDA

For:

CONTROL DEVICE AND CONTROL METHOD
FOR NETWORK-CONNECTED DEVICE

Confirmation No.:

7557

U.S. Serial No.:

09/151,321

Filed:

September 11, 1998

Group Art Unit:

2624

Examiner:

Douglas Q. Tran

BOX AF

Assistant Commissioner

for Patents

Washington, D.C. 20231

Dear Sir:

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being transmitted via
facsimile to Examiner Douglas Q. Tran at facsimile number
703/872-9314, on

October 22, 2002

Date of Deposit

Kathy E. Needleman

Name of Applicant, Assignee, or Registered Representative

Kathy Needleman

Signature

October 22, 2002

Date of Signature

COMMUNICATION IN RESPONSE TO EXAMINER'S INTERVIEW

This Communication is in response to an Examiner's Interview conducted
October 10, 2002 with Primary Examiner Garcia, in which a request was made to provide
a succinct description of a particular embodiment of the claimed invention.

REMARKS

The following remarks are offered by way of example and not by way of limitation. As an initial matter, some aspects of the invention include but are not limited to: a network system; an image forming apparatus (printer) connected with a job management device (controller) through a network; and, a device for selecting a network-connected image forming apparatus (one printer) from a plurality of network-connected image forming apparatuses (many printers).

When numerous printers are connected through a network, an input job being sent for printing could theoretically be routed by a controller through the network to any one of the plurality of network-connected printers. If an input job has a specific mode, that is, if the input job requires special handling, (such as: printing on a special paper size, printing from special stock contained in a manual feed tray, stapling, collating, stopping between print jobs, etc.), the input job must be routed to a printer capable of handling that specific mode. For example, if an input job requires printing from irregular sized paper stock contained in a manual feed tray of the printer, then the input job must be routed to a particular printer which has a manual feed tray print capability and whose manual feed tray contains that particular size paper. Even if the particular printer has the capability to print the specific mode of the print job (i.e., it has a manual feed tray capable of containing the irregular size paper), such a request may require stopping the printer each time a print request having a specific mode is made in order to load the requisite size paper into the manual feed paper tray of the printer. Because, the printer would be stopped from printing while waiting for the proper size paper to be placed in the manual feed tray for printing an earlier print job, any subsequently input print jobs which do not have a special mode would be prevented from being printed until the earlier submitted print job requiring the specific mode was printed. This unfortunate circumstance seriously impacts printer efficiency.

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Generally, print jobs requiring printing from the manual feed tray need to have the requisite irregular size paper placed in the manual feed tray before each print job is printed. In certain embodiments of the present invention, if a prior print job having a particular specific mode print request (i.e., requiring printing from the manual feed tray) is already stored in one printer awaiting printing, the printing from that one printer must be interrupted (i.e., the printer stopped) when loading the proper size paper into the proper tray for printing that stored prior print job. Then, if another print job is input that also includes the same specific mode print request (i.e., printing from the manual feed tray) as that of the prior stored print job, the system would route the newly input print job to the printer which already has stored a prior print job having that particular specific mode (i.e., requiring printing from the manual feed tray). This is because printing by that printer must already be interrupted when the printer is prepared (i.e., the manual feed tray is loaded with the requisite sized paper) to print the prior stored print job having the particular specific mode requiring printing from the manual feed tray containing an irregular size paper. Thus, that particular printer will already be required to be stopped to insure that the proper size paper is loaded into the manual feed tray prior for printing the jobs. If another print job requiring a regular paper size is input, the system would route the print job to a printer other than the printer which is already storing a print job requiring the specific mode. In that case, the printing of the print job requiring a regular paper size will be done immediately, because print jobs requiring the specific mode are concentrated at one printer and other printers are available for the print job requiring a regular paper size. This invention is thus a very efficient resource management tool for printers.

Additionally, Applicant would be pleased to submit a summary of the arguments previously submitted with respect to allowability of each of the claims in the present application if the Examiner would find it helpful.

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After the Examiner has had an opportunity to review this communication, Applicant's representatives respectfully requests an opportunity to discuss the claims with the Examiner and his Primary.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attached is the Communication in Response to Examiner's Interview which we spoke about earlier today. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Once again, thank you for your assistance .

Kathy E. Needleman, Esq.
Sidley Austin Brown & Wood

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